

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
EUR-12 OMB-01 AID-05 /083 W
-----121480 180820Z /21

R 180404Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6301
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MANAMA 1368

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, IR, BA, XF
SUBJECT: AMIR'S REPORT ON HIS VISIT TO IRAN

1. DURING LUNCH WITH ME JUNE 14 AMIR BRIEFED ME ON HIS
JUNE 10-13 STATE VISIT TO IRAN. AMIR SAID HE WAS IM-
PRESSED BY THE POMP OF HIS WELCOME AND LUSHNESS OF HIS
QUARTERS IN TEHRAN THOUGH SOME ASPECTS DISTURBED HIM. SHAH
HAD AMIR'S CHARTERED GULFAIR JET ESCORTED BY PHANTOMS
FROM BORDER TO TEHRAN, INCLUDING AN AIR-TO-AIR REFUELING
ENROUTE WHICH AMIR SAID HE WAS CERTAIN WAS NOT NEEDED --
JUST SHOWING OFF. AMIR SAID PHANTOMS MADE HIM NERVOUS
AND ON RETURN TRIP HE ASKED THEM TO TURN BACK. AMIR IS
GREAT ADMIRER OF THE SHAH BUT HE SAID HE FELT THE IMPERIAL
TRAPPINGS ARE PUTTING TOO GREAT A DISTANCE BETWEEN SHAH AND
THE PEOPLE. AMIR SAID HE HAD HIS MOST IMPORTANT TALKS WITH
THE SHAH ALONE, WITHOUT ANY OF HIS OR SHAH'S STAFF PRESENT.
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2. AMIR SAID SHAH WAS VERY DISTURBED ABOUT COUP IN KABUL,
WHICH SHAH CLAIMED TO HAVE PREDICTED BUT "NOBODY WOULD
LISTEN." SHAH TOLD AMIR THAT IRAN WOULD MAKE
MAJOR EFFORT
TO ASSURE THAT IRAQ DOES NOT BECOME ANOTHER
AFGHANISTAN. IRAN WOULD WORK FOR CLOSEST POSSIBLE RELATIONS

WITH BAGHDAD IN ORDER TO WEAN IRAQIS AWAY FROM THE SOVIETS. SHAH SAID HE FELT TIME WAS GOOD FOR SUCH AN EFFORT, GIVEN RECENT STRAINS IN IRAQI-SOVIET RELATIONS, AND HE HOPED ARAB STATES OF GULF WOULD HELP IN THIS IMPORTANT WORK. AMIR INTERRUPTED HIS NARRATIVE TO TELL ME HE DOUBTED IRAQIS WOULD CHANGE THEIR WAYS AND NOTED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY DECLINED TO GIVE AGREEMENT TO PROPOSED NEW IRAQI AMBASSADOR BECAUSE MAN IS "KNOWN SPY" WHO IS IN PAST DECLARED PERSONA NON GRATA BY CANADIANS. HE SAID PRESENT IRAQI AMBASSADOR WAS BEING PULLED OUT BECAUSE HE "WAS NOT VERY GOOD AT SUBVERSION."

3. EVENTS IN LOWER GULF ALSO COVERED IN AMIR'S TALKS WITH SHAH. MANAMA 1358 DESCRIBED SHAH'S CONCERN ABOUT TENSIONS IN UAE AND AMIR'S AGREEMENT TO CONVEY MESSAGE FROM SHAH TO UAE LEADERS. AMIR SAID SHAH ALSO VERY CONCERNED ABOUT HEATING UP OF DHOFAR REBELLION. MURDER IN OMAN OF FIVE ENGLISHMEN AND LATER ATTACK ON OMANI MILITARY PATROL SEEMED TO BOTH SHAH AND AMIR TO SIGNAL THAT DHOFAR REBELLION IS ON AGAIN. AMIR SAID HE AND SHAH FELT THAT PDRY IS NOW OR WILL SOON AGAIN PLAY ACTIVE ROLE AGAINST OMAN AND THAT PDRY OFFICIALS FEEL SECURE THAT THEIR SOVIET PATRONS WILL SUPPORT THEIR ADVENTURE. AMIR THEN ASKED ME WHAT WAS "REAL" PURPOSE OF FORMER AMBASSADOR TWINAM'S TRIP TO ADEN. I SAID TALKS WOULD BE PURELY EXPLORATORY; THERE ARE NUMBER OF VERY PRACTICAL ISSUES

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BETWEEN US AND PDRY, SUCH AS SEIZURE OF OUR PROPERTY THERE, WHICH TWINAM AND HIS PARTY WOULD DISCUSS. PURPOSE OF TRIP DEFINITELY NOT TO REOPEN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS; THIS WOULD BE PREMATURE.

4. AMIR SAID DISCUSSION WITH SHAH ABOUT ARAB-ISRAEL ISSUE CENTERED AROUND SHAH'S UNHAPPINESS WITH PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT. SHAH SAID HE FELT PALESTINIANS' LACK OF UNITY, AND USE OF TERROR TACTICS BY SOME GROUPS, PLAYED INTO ISRAEL'S HANDS AND HAD BECOME MAJOR OBSTACLE TO PEACE. AMIR SAID

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MANAMA 1368

THAT AT RECEPTION IN TEHRAN JORDANIAN AMBASSADOR HAD IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS A PALESTINIAN TO AMIR AND ASKED IF AMIR SUPPORTED PALESTINIAN CAUSE. AMIR SAID HE REPLIED THAT BAHRAIN DID SUPPORT THE CAUSE BUT ASKED WHO SPEAKS FOR THE CAUSE AND WHY DO PALESTINIANS ATTACK OTHER ARABS? AMIR SAID JORDANIAN AMKESSADMN DID NOT REPLY.

5. AMIR SAID ONLY FORMAL AGREEMENT PLANNED FOR THE VISIT WAS ONE ON CULTURAL/EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE, AS DESCRIBED TEHRAN 5720. AMIR SAID REAL MOTIVE BEHIND THIS AGREEMENT WAS IRANIAN DESIRE TO OPEN AN IRANIAN SCHOOL HERE, AMIR SAID HE WAS NOT TOO HAPPY ABOUT THIS BUT COULD NOT REFUSE SINCE THERE ARE INDIAN, ENGLISH, AMERICAN AND FRENCH SCHOOLS IN BAHRAIN. HE SAID THE SCHOOL WILL SERVE SOME 400 IRANIAN CHILDREN HERE. (COMMENT: AMIR'S UNHAPPINESS OF COURSE IS DUE TO ALREADY STRONG IRANIAN INFLUENCE HERE; SOME FORTY PERCENT OF BAHRAINIS ARE FROM ETHNIC PERSIAN
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BACLGROUND. END COMMENT). I ASKED AMIR IF FACT THAT HIS EDUCATION MINISTER HAD MISSED THE FLIGHT TO TEHRAN HAD CAUSED ANY PROBLEM FOR THE VISIT. AMIR LAUGHED AND SAID MINISTER OF EDUCATION PROBABLY HAD MISSED THE FLIGHT ON PURPOSE BECAUSE IT WAS FOREIGN MINISTER WHO HAD WORKED OUT DETAILS OF EDUCATIONAL/CULTURAL AGREEMENT AND MIN ED'S NOSE WAS OUT OF JOINT.

6. AMIR THEN ASKED ME HOW I SAW US-IRANIAN RELATIONS. I SAID THEY ARE EXCELLENT AND FUTURE SEEMS TO PROMISE EVEN CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. AMIR SAID

THIS WAS VERY CLOSE TO SHAH'S OWN VIEW BUT THAT SHAH ALSO WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT AMERICAN RESOLVE AND ABILITY TO ACT TO COUNTER GROWING SOVIET THREAT TO THIS REGION. SHAH SAID EVEN BEST INTENTIONS AND PLANS OF US ADMINISTRATION CAN BE UPSET BY ILL-INFORMED CONGRESS STILL HAUNTED BY VIETNAM AND WATERGATE. I SAID THAT THESE EVENTS DID INDEED HAVE EFFECT ON ALL AMERICANS AND THAT PERHAPS PENDULUM HAD SWUNG TOO FAR IN SOME CASES. BUT PENDULUM SEEMS TO BE SWINGING BACK TOWARD MORE REASONED APPROACHES TO REAL PROBLEMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND THAT I FELT THAT THIS TREND

WOULD CONTINUE. AMIR SAID HE HOPED SO, AND SAW SIGNS OF IT IN SENATE VOTE ON AICCRAFT SALES, BECAUSE AMERICA'S INTERESTS AND FRIENDS IN THIS REGION OSEEM TO BE ENTERING A PERIOD OF GREAT DANGER.

7. I ASKED REF AMIR HAD DISCUSSED WITH SHAH CONCERN WHICH AMIR PREVIOUSLY HAD SHARED WITH ME ABOUT LATEST IRANIAN INTERNAL TROUBLES. AMIR SEID SHAH DID NOT RAISE IT AND HE DID NOT FEEL IT WOULD BE POLITE TO DO SO. THEY DID DISCUSS IN GENERAL TERMS THE NEED FOR GREATER REGIONAL COPERATION IN SECURITY MATTERS BUT THAT NOTHING SPECIFIC WAS AGREED. AMIR
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SAID MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY HAD DISCUSSED IRANIAN INTERNAL SITUATION WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS BUT, NOT SURPRISINGLY, REPLY WAS THAT TROUBLES WERE SERIOUS BUT NOT SO SERIOUS THAT SHAH COULD NOT HANDLE SITUATION.

8. COMMENT: AMIR CLEARLY WAS PLEASED BY THE VISIT, THOUGH NOT IMPRESSED BY ALL THE POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE. HE FELT THERE IS TOO MUCH OF THIS AROUND THE SHAH, AND STILL TOO MUCH POVERTY IN A COUNTRY SO RICH. AMIR WAS PLEASED TO BE ASKED TO DO A FAVOR FOR THE SHAH AND THIS REINFORCED HIS BELIEF, AND THAT OF MOST OF GOB, THAT AMONG SMALL ARAB GULF STATES BAHRAIN HAS THE BEST RELATIONS WITH IRAN.

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